



THE
BRIDEGROOME

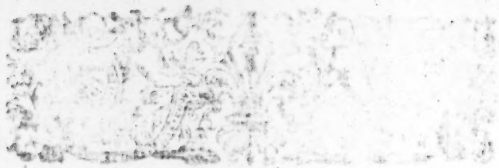
BY
SAMVEL HIERON.

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LONDON

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the *Bull-head*. 1613.



THE NEGRO-OMIE

BY

JAMES MONROE



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1817.

TO THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFULL AND

vertuous Lady, the Lady

Brigit Halsewell of

Halsewell in So-

merfet.



Adam, I pray, pardon my
boldnesse, in that being
unknowne, I dare thus
to presse upon you with these pa-
pers. My excuse is ; he who first
moued me to preach, and since per-
swaded me to publish this ensuing
Sermon, would needs I should in-
scribe it to your Name. It was de-
liuered at the Nuptials of your hope-
full Heire ; in that respect, I know
it shall finde acceptance. But yet the
maine inducement to me, to com-
mend it by this particular direction
to your Ladiship, is the constant

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

report I haue receiued , of your good
affection to the least things. In as-
surance of this, I was the more em-
boldened to present you with this
Mite , which if it shall afford any
comfort either to your selfe, or to any
other truly fearing God , I haue all
that I aimed at , in imparting it to
the common view. For which end I
will follow it with my prayers , and
to your Ladiship in particular, will
remaine, From Modbury,

A true desirer of
the only good,

SAM. HIERON.



I
THE
BRIDEGROOME.

Math. Chap. 9. Ver. 15.

Can the children of the Mariage-chamber mourne, as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the daies shall come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from you, and then shall they fast.



Being entreated to this service, my desire was to handle some such Scripture, as might occasion me both to deliuer something agreeable to the cause of our present meeting, and withall to speake that which might concerne vs all, as we be Christians.

*This Sermon
was preached at
a Mariage.*

A 4 Should

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Should I speake nothing of Marriage duties, happely when I had done, it might be said of some, *what was this Sermon to the present busines?* Should I treat therof only? many (perhaps) might go away with a conceit, that they had heard nothing which did much concerne them. This text I trust shall fit both turnes; of which I will not doubt to say, as Iacob did of his pretended venison: *The Lord hath brought it to my hands*^a. I entreat you to sit vp and eat thereof, that your soules may blesse mee, when you shall find that I haue presented you with such saoury meat, as either you doe loue, or els ought, (if your stomakes be well affected) to desire.

The state of the Text.

Touching this Text, I pray you in a word to conceiue thus much. Ceremonies haue been in all ages of the Church, because of the diuersity of mens affections an occasion

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sion of contention. They which haue agreed well together in the Mainé, yet haue been exceedingly heated, and (as is said of Paul and Barnabas ^b) *stirred* one against the ^b Act. 15. 39. other in the Bye, and hereby the chiefe buineſſe hath beene much letted, and the common enemie much aduantaged. Sathan (the enginer of all miſchiefe) practized this ſtratagem in the daies of our Sauour. When he perceiued how the Truth grew and preuailed by the vniforme proceedings of Iohn Baptiſt and Chriſt, he endeuoured to make a Rent (if it were poſſible) betwixt them by promoting a queſtion about *Faſting*. Iohn trayned vp his diſciples in much outward ſtriſtneſſe, the follower of our Sauour liued (as might ſeem) after a more eaſie faſhion. Here now grew a queſtion; How could the freedom of Chriſts diſciples be iuſtified without condemning the auſteritie

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austeritie of Iohn : and if Iohns strictnesse was good, surely then the libertie of Christ could not be approoued. This moued the wicked Pharisees to taxe them both, & to say (as they did) that the one had a Deuill, and the other was a

•Luk.7.33.34 Glutton^c. This matter was set a foot by some of Iohns approouers and the Pharisees ioyned with them : indeed to them it would haue been a ioy to haue seen Christ and Iohn by the eares. The challenge is made something peremptorily in the former verse, *Why doe not thy disciples fast?* Now my Text is Christs plea for clearing of himselfe, and for deciding of the difference : *Can the children of the mariage chamber mourne &c.* Wherein hee compares himselfe to a Bridegrome, and his Disciples to the speciall guests chosen to accompanie the Bridegroom. Now a Wedding (saith he) you all know, is a
time

time of mirth, not of mourning, of feasting not of fasting ; will you that I should now stint my Disciples as Iohn doth his ? Should I, during the time of this my comfortable presence with them, apply them to this sadder course of fasting ? It fitteth not with that plenty of reioycing, which my being among them doth afford. Indeed there is a time approching, in which I shall bee taken from them, that will be a time of humiliation, *then shall they Fast.* Thus haue you the state of this Scripture.

For order in handling it, I will follow this course. *The order in handling is.* Sith it is a similitude fetched from such a businesse as hath giuen Being to this dayes meeting, I will first speake of such things, as out of the Text may concerne the present occasion, and then of such things as were principally intended by our Sauour and doe concerne vs all. Respectiue-ly

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Attuely to the occasion, I will treat of two particulars. 1. The title of a Bridegroom applied to Christ. 2. The lawfulness of reioyning together, when wee are called to the companie of a Bridegroom.

It is manifest to al who conceiue ought, that by the title of a *Bridegroom* our Sauiour ment himselfe. In Math. Chap. 25. he which in the first verse is called the *Bridegroom*, in the thirteenth, is termed the *son of man*. The Church is his *Beloued*^d.

* Can. 1. 8.

This life is the time of Wooing & Betrothing. The Ministers of the Gospel are the *Bridegrooms friends*^e, and do beseech, as in *Christs*

* Ioh. 3. 29.

* 2. Cor. 5. 20.

steed^f, they are buied in preparing the Church for *one husband*, and to present her as a pure virgin vnto

* 2. Cor. 11. 2.

Christ^g. The assurances are here drawne vp, and he hath giuen his word in his Word, vnto her, that he will marry her vnto him for euer, in iudgment, in mercy and in compassion^h.

sion^h. *Earnest* is givenⁱ: A ioynture is made, *thee shalt see an Heire*ⁱ *annexed with Christ*^k. He sendeth her euer and anon tokens of loue, *spirituall blessings in heauenly things*^l, *thee shalt not bee destitute of any gift*^m. Hce is but gone before to prepare a place for her & her train in the many mansions of his *Fathers house*ⁿ. He will returne, and the last day of the World, shall be the first day of her full enioying him. Now *thee cryeth as the mother of Sifera, Why is his chariot so long, why tary the wheeles of his chariot*^o? and still beggeth with him by sighes vnepressable, *Returne my welbeloued*^p, but then the marriage shall be consummate, and *thee shalt be euer with the Lord*^q. Thus you see how well the title of a *Bridegroom* agreeth vnto Christ: I wil not worke so much as I could out of this title, respectiue to the matter of Mariage; onely this:
 This

^h Hof. 2. 19.

ⁱ Eph. 1. 14.

^k Rom. 8. 17.

^l Eph. 1. 3.

^m 1. Cor. 1. 7.

ⁿ Ioh. 14. 2 3.

^o Iudg. 5. 28.

^p Cant. 2. 17.

^q 1. Thes. 4. 17.

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The 1. Doct.

This name given to Christ doth teach euery one that carieth the same title two things. 1. How to chuse his Loue. 2. How to loue his choise. Touching the former of these I set downe this doctrine. *That in chusing a spouse there ought more respect to be had to inward goodnesse then to outward goods.* Such hath been the course of this our Bridegroom. In seeking of a Church and people to himselfe, what eye hath he caried to nobilitie of birth, to betternes of blood, to propernesse of person, to exactnesse of beauty, to abundance of wealth, to any manner of outward thing? *Hee seeth not as man seeth^r. He craueth no bullocke out of the house, nor goate from the fold^r. Hee delighteth not in the legs of any man^r. He requesteth not the rich more than the poore^u, but in euery nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousnesse is accepted with him^x.* All that he requieth

^r1. Sam. 16. 7.

^rPsal. 50. 9.

^rPsal. 147. 10.

^uIob 34. 19.

Ast. 10. 35.

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quireth is to *fear him, to walke in his wayes and to loue him* ^r. His maine expectation is, that his beloued be *all glorious within* ^z, that shee be *decked inwardly with lowlines of mind* ^a, *the hid man of the heart is before him a thing much set by* ^b. Now I demand, shall his example who is the *author and finisher of our Faith* ^c bee of no value? Should not the *same minde* bee in vs, which was euen in him ^d? Should wee not shew forth the *vertues of him that hath called vs* ^e? Indeed in true iudgment, that which is to bee desired of a man is his *goodnesse* ^f. What is *beauty without vnderstanding, but as a Jewell of gold in a swines snout* ^g? What benefit to haue a *contentious woman with a wide house* ^h? Better to dwell in a corner where one may sit dry, than to be vexed with such a continuall *dropping* ⁱ. Was Iezabel the better for her paint ^k, or had Ahab any whit the better bargaine in her because shee

^r Deut. 10. 12.

^a Psal. 45. 13.

^a 1. Pet. 5. 5.

^b 1. Pet. 3. 4.

^c Heb. 12. 2.

^d Phil. 2. 5.

^e 1. Pet. 2. 9.

^f Pro. 19. 23.

^g Pro. 11. 22.

^h Pro. 21. 9.

ⁱ Prou. 19. 13.

^k 2. King. 9. 30.

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1. King. 16. Shee was the daughter of a King ¹?
 31. Better with Booz to take Ruth
 from among the gleaners, and with
 Jacob, to serue seuen yeeres for a
 wench that keepeth sheep, then to
 1. King. 15. haue an idolatrous Maacah ^m or a
 13. treacherous Athaliah ⁿ. The rule
 2. King. 11.1. of *seeking the kingdome of God first* ^p
 p. Math. 6. 33. ought to take place in all our vn-
 dertakings, especially in Mariage,
 of which the purpose in Gods or-
 daining it, is a *godly seed* ^q: It is the
 1. Mal. 2. 15. foundation of a familie, and a fa-
 milie ought to be the modell of a
 Church, and therefore in it, that
 should chiefly bee intended, by
 which religion may be furthered.
 It is not denyed but outward
 things in matters of wedlock may
 be looked too. It is fit, that, as for
 yeeres, so for estate and meanes
 there should be a proportion, for
 1. Cor. 14. *God is not the author of confusion* ^r.
 33. Dauid was not apt by and by to
 entertaine the motion of marrying
 so

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so much about his reach, as with the daughter of a King, himselfe but the son of *Ishai* the Yeoman &c.

1. Sam. 18.

18.

It is possible for a man to be either too base or too presumptuous in his choice. Besides, the rule of the Scripture, (*Parents lay up for the children*) bindeth to a care to dispose so of them, that as much as may bee, they may enjoy, that more blessed thing, to give rather than receive.

1. Cor. 13.

14.

But the question is now touching the scope in the matter of choice; not whether Hagar & Sarah may dwell together, but which of the two must be Mistress. The speciall thing which must be sought for, must be this, to haue an euen yoke-fellow, which shall be fit in bearing that yoke which Christ calleth to.

Act. 20. 25.

Our Bridegroom propoundeth this as the maine article in his wooing: *Be holy as I am holy*. All the world shall not win him to the contract where this

Math. 11. 29.

1. Pet. 1. 16.

B

wants.

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wants. Hee will haue no *concord*
 2. Cor. 6. 15. with *Belial* ². This is the rule of
 choice. What said Iehu to Ionadab
 when hee was following his course
 against the posteritie of Ahab and
 against Baal, *Is thy heart upright as*
 a King. 10. 15. *mine is, then giue me thy hand* ^a: such
 a question were not amisse, for a
 man to aske the woman, *Is thy heart*
as mine for matters of religion, thus &
thus am I, art thou so also? then giue
me thy hand: otherwise as Dauid
 said to Mephibosheth, *why speakest*
 b 2. Sam 19. *thou any more of thy matters* ^b, what
 29. should wee treat of portions and
 ioyntures, when wee be not like to
 agree together in the principall.

Thovse. I demand now of you, haue the
 men of this generation no need to
 bee taught this lesson? I would I
 could perswade as many to learne
 it, as I know haue need to be taught
 it. The truth is, generally in mat-
 ters of choise, religion beareth the
 smallest stroke. Mee thinkes, the
 choice

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choice of many about wiues, is like that in vse about bargaines and farmes. The questions are (mostly) *What is it worth besides the rent? what house upon it, how neere the market, the mill, the sand?* When heare you this; *How neere the Church, or, what Minister in the Parish, or, what good Preacher dwelleth by?* Thus is it in this matter also; thus it runneth, *what portion, what ioynture, how much money in hand, what securitie for the rest?* Not a word, *how for religion, what knowledge of God, how disposed in things that concerne the kingdome of God?* Nay, the truth is, men are so violent this way, that scarcely ordinarie naturall contentments are looked vnto as they should: where there may be a good lading of that *thicke clay*, which the Prophet speaketh of ^c, or that which *Achsah*, ^c Heb. 2. 6. *Calebs* daughter craued at her marriage, *springs aboue and springs beneath* ^d, men will loue, they haue ^d Ios. 15. 19.

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their affections at commaund. Wanton *Dinah*, subtle *Dalilah*, scorning *Micholl*, gainfaying *Zipporah*, who were not like to bee entertained vpon these termes? Were shee as obedient as *Sarah*, as wise as *Deborah*, as religious as the *Shunnamite*, as deuout as *Hannah*, as well affected to the word as *Lydia*, yet shall shee bee thrust out with as much contempt as *Thamer* was by *Ammon*, if shee want these. Now, sie

2. Sam. 13.

17. vpon this misjudging age, nothing doth more declare the scarcitie of religion among men. The *Athenians* desiring to finde out their childrens inclination, that so they might direct them to such callings as they were fit for, would bring them into a roome full of all manner of instruments: look therfore what kinde of instrument any one did chuse, and seemed to take delight in, to that calling wherto that instrument belonged, their conclusion

sion was hee was disposed. So in this, the manner of mens choice doth proclaime their hearts. It is a signe they haue no great loue to religion, sith they make so small enquirie for religion. Their maine call is for wealth, this sheweth that their principall affection is to the world. I pray God that that which is so powerfull to discover this sin, may bee as effectuall to reforme it, that the guilty may lament it, and they which are yet to come to the occasion of shewing their disposition in it, may auoid it. And thus far of learning to chuse. The next is of louing where we haue chosen.

It is well knowen that Christs loue to his Church is the patterne of that loue which the husband oweth to his wife^f. Now in ^{f Eph. 5. 25.} Christs loue to his Church two things especially deserue note. 1. Bountie (hee withholds nothing which may bee for his Churches

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good) 2 Perpetuity (he neuer lea-
ueth where he once loueth) *I haue*
loued thee with an euerlasting loue, saith
he to his Church: ^s Hence wee are
taught, first, *That the Bridegroomes*
loue to his beloved, ought to extend and
reach as farre, as any necessitie in her
shall require a supply. Paul saith *loue*
is bountifull ^h: And indeed this is
Bounty, to cary that hart to a wife,
as to leaue (if it bee possible) no
necessity vn supplied. Is not the
loue of Christ to his Church such?
Wherin may it be truly sayd that
he hath beene sparing, or that hee
hath caried the matter with a pin-
ching hand? Hauing nothing
dearer to himselfe then himselfe,
yet in his loue *he gaue himselfe as an*
offring vnto God ⁱ: He hath bound
himselfe by promise to his elect,
not to *leau*e *them comfortlesse* ^k: he is
touched with a feeling of euery infirmi-
ty ^l, and *through his riches he will ful-*
fill all their necessities ^m. Heere is the
proportion

^s Iere. 31. 3.

The 2 d^o s^t.

^h 1. Cor. 13. 4.

ⁱ Ephe. 5. 2.

^k Ioh. 14. 18.

^l Heb. 4. 15.

^m 2 hil. 4. 19.

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proportion and scantling of the husbands loue. What other thing is required when hee is called *the Head of the wife*^{a Eph. 5.23.} but that he should looke out euery way, to protect, to supply, to furnish, to remooue inconueniences, to procure comforts. What els is intended in that iniunction, *so ought men to loue their wives as themselves*^{a Eph. 5.28.} ? Who, vnlesse it be some hatefull miser is pinching, to himselfe? Now, the necessities of a wife which be to be supplied are of two sorts ; either inward or outward. The inward (which respect the soule) are chiefly to bee looked vnto, the soule being the more worthy part. The husband ought to be vnto the wife a kinde of domesticall instructor. Wherefore els is she to *aske him at home*^{a Pl. Cor. 14.35.} ? and how otherwise shall he be *the guide of her youth*^{a Prou. 2.17.} , if he be not able and willing to guide her *feet in the way of peace*^{a Luk. 1.79.} . Outward wants must be regarded

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too. This is that which the spirit of God calleth, *the spreading of the wing, 'nourishing and cherishing'*. Indeed I may say as Lot did in another case, *Wherefore els is she come vnder the Husbands rooffe* " ? There must bee mainetenance according to her ranke and that with cheerefulnesse. (Christ leadeth his Church with benefits and that vn-sought to); And there must be due employment; her husbands *Heart must trust in her* *. There is no loue where there is niggardlinesse, in the one, and causeles suspition in the other. Heere is the bounty of loue: a tender and a kinde respect had to euery need.

The yse. 1. This reprooueth the common neglect. Husbands seeke little to
 " further the saluation of their wiues:
 " some cannot doe it, so great is their
 " ignorance, and some care not to do
 " it, so little is their conscience. But
 " if thy wife die in her sinne, through
 thy

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thy default, thy not teaching, thy
not admonishing, thy not praying
with her and for her, God will re-
quire her bloud at thy hands. Thou
art liable to account for the soule
of thy seruant, euen his which is
behind the ewes ¹, or at *the mill* ², ¹Ps. 78. 71.
much more for hers which *lyeth in* ³Exod. 11. 5.
thy bosome ⁴, and is ordained to bee ⁵Deu. 19. 6.
an *heire with thee of the grace of life* ⁶. ⁷1. Pet. 3. 7.

Secondly this taxeth the straight-
nesse of many husbands in matters
of outward conueniency : there is
scarcely ought to be gotten from
them except it be euen wrung out
by importunitie, or wrought out
by some indirect and vniustifiable
meanes: There is I know an extre-
mity of too much vxoriousnesse,
such as is in some who are forward
to further euery vaine and idle hu-
mour of the wife. But there must
be a meane betwixt a sparing and a
dissolute hand. *A good man doth*
measure his affaires by iudgement ⁸ : ⁹Ps. 112. 5.
and

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^d 1 Cor. 13. 4. and *Loue as it is bountiful*, ^d so it is discrete, for it *reioyceth not in Iniquity*.
In uxorem alienam omnis amor turpis, in suam coniugis.
 Hier.

To another mans wife all loue is dishonest: so is too much to a mans owne not commendable. There may be dotage at home, as well as adulterie abroad. Remember the patterne. Christ leaueth the church neither in want, nor in wantonesse, he will supply her in the one, and cut her short in the other. Thus farre of the Bounty of Loue.

The third doct. The second thing imitable in Christs loue is Perpetuity. The Doctrine is, *That the husbands loue to his wife must bee continued in stedfastnesse to the end.* This is the glory of our Bridegroome, where hee loueth, *he loueth to the end* ^f: His gifts & callings are without repentance ^s: Nothing is able to seperate from his
^g John. 13. 1. ^h Rom. 11. 29. ⁱ Rom. 8. 39. *Loue* ^h. If there be a small fault hee hides it, he remits it, hee may chasten it, but he will not cast off for it. When is a man weary of loue to himselfe?

himselfe? When is the head become an enemy to a limme, if it haue a deformity? Nay it doth both rend and tender it so much the more. There is nothing hath right to the abolishment of a mans loue to his wife, but that which maketh her no Wife, and that is, Adultery or death: and yet euen after death there ought to bee a respect to her memory, and after her separation for adulterie, a loue of pity, though not of delight. *Reioyce with the wife of thy youth, let her breastes satisfie thee at all times*ⁱ. Constancy is the crowne of euery good action; Indeed good is not good, if it be not perpetuall; and it is one of the qualities of *Loue not to fall away*^k. Pio. 5. 19.

This condemneth the inconstancy of many mens affections. *Seneca* speaketh of one, who was so fond, that he tied his wife to him with his garter: forsooth he could not endure her out of his sight. Such violent

violent loue is in some in the daies of their first acquaintance, that they scarce can tell what belongs to comelines, which yet in time loath as much, as they were ouer abundantly kind in the beginning. It is the glory of mariage when there is both a continuance and a growth of loue, so that the last parting affecteth, with greater griefe, then the first meeting satisfied with content. He that would further this had need of good discretion. It must be his *glory to passe by many offences*¹; and to temper himselfe from the ouer-quick apprehension of euery occasion of distast. His

¹ 1. Pet. 4. 8. Loue must *coner*,^m yea and labour to recouer a multitude of defects. Bitternes and violence must be no guests in his house, and of all other *Wraths*, it were pity the Sunne should *go downe upon* hisⁿ to his wife. The more tender the loue, the more hard to be sodered, when
it

¹ Pro. 19. 11.

² 1. Pet. 4. 8.

³ Eph. 4. 26.

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it hath receiued a cracke. I may say of such breaches as *Solomon* doth of those betwixt Brethren, they are as the barres of a Palace °; it is not easie to dissolue them. These things must be watched against, that loue may bee perpetuall. Thus much how euery bridegroom may learne of this grand Bridegroom, how to chuse his loue and how to loue his choice. In chusing let religion be the maine enquiry. In louing let there be bounty to supply euery want, and constancy to keep the affection strong vnto the End.

• Pro. 13. 19.

Now lest I should be thought to giue instructions but by halues, a word let me adde touching her to whom the Bridegroomes loue must be thus bountifull, thus perpetuall. Out of his duty shee may iudge of hers. Is he bound to loue and shall it be free for her, to answer his good affection with neglect.

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lest. If he must be bountifull, surely she must be dutifull, if he must not spare to supplie her, shee must not faile to obey him. If his loue must be to her without change, her fashion must be such to him as may occasion no distast. Hee must instruct, she must learne; he must guide, she must follow, he must admonish, she must hearken; he must allow her cheerefully out of his estate, she must conforme her selfe contentedly to his estate. He must not straiten her, and she must not vndoe him: he must trust her, and she must not deceiue him: he must not be bitter, and she must not be stout. In a word he must euer account her for his Loue, and shee must euer esteeme him as her head. Here is a sweet proportion. I wish it to you that are espoused this day, it shalbe better vnto you then both your estates. So much of that which is to be noted out of the similitude,

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militude, agreeably to the present
occasion.

The next generall thing is the
Lawfulnes of reioycing, when we
are called to the company of the
Bridegroom. Our Sauour secretly
intinuateth this to be lawfull:
for out of the freedome to be more
cheerefull then vsuall at a Mariage,
he iustifieth his course of not bin-
ding his disciples to the seuerity of
fasting, whiles he was present. The
Doctrine is thus. *That there is a law-* *The 4. Doct.*
fulnes of mutuall Reioycing at Mariage
Solemnities. I haue alreadie made it
to appeare how this Doctrine
springeth hence. Christ buildeth
vpon this generall ground, that a
Mariage is rather a time of gladnes
then of mourning. It is well
knowne that our Sauour himsefe,
being thereunto inuited, afforded
his presence at a Mariage feast in
Cana of Galile, yea and by his first
miracle supplied there the lacke of
• wine,

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wine, & a sufficient testimonie of the lawfulnessse of the liberall vse of the creatures of God vpon such an occasion. I remember how in the Prophet^s, the Lord describeth the contentment he taketh in his chosen, by that ioy which is vpon the mariage day : *as a Bridegroom is glad of the Bride, so shall thy God reioice ouer thee.* With this sortes the parable, in which the inuiling & calling of men by the Gospell to the grace of God, is shadowed out by a *Mariage-feast*, celebrated by a king at the nuptials of his sonne, to which many are entreated^r. Such courses we read in Scriptures vpon like occasions, as Abrahams feast at Isaacks weaning^t, Iosephs feast at the entertainment of his brethren^r, the peoples feast after the returne from captiuitie, when the law had been expounded to them, Neh. 8. 10. ^uthe Iewes feast, vpon their deliuerance from Hamans conspiracy^x,
In

⁴II. 63. 5.

²Math. 22.

¹Gen. 21. 8.

²Gen. 43. 32.

Neh. 8. 10.

²Ester. 9. 22.

The Bridegroom. 27

In the primitiue Church they had *Loue-feasts* ¹. In a word, our Saviours direction how a man should demean himselfe being inuited to a Mariage-feast, ² is a sufficient iustification of this point : for had the course been vnlawiul, he would rather haue vtterly inhibited it then haue deliuered rules of behaviour at it.

¹Iude v. 12.

²Luk. 19. 7.

The vse is not, to perswade to this *The vse.* cause, or to vrge it, for although we may doe it, yet we are not bound to do it) but to informe vs heerein out of Gods Word, that we may behaue our selues in things of this nature as *Men of knowledge*, which is the true seasoning vnto euery course. S. Paul saith that *the creatures of God are sanctified by the Word.*

² Euery man eates, and eating in it owne nature is not vnlawfull, but yet euery mans eating is not lawfull : So, there is a generall vse of Mariage-feasts, and a Mariage-feast in it owne nature is lawfull, but
C yet

¹ 1 Tim. 4. 5.

yet euery mans vsing of it is not good : and why ? because it is not *sanctified vnto him by the Word*, hee goeth to it at aduenture, his conscience not hauing any direction and guidance from the Word, and so that which is lawfull in it selfe becometh a sinne vnto him. It is a good course for a Christian to be sure of his warrant for *his actions*.

¶ Rom. 14. 23; *Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne*^b. Againe, the lawfulnessse of the thing, bindes to a care to take heed of vnlawfulnessse in the vse. There be no greater sins committed then in the abuse of lawfull things. The name of (lawful) carieth vs headlong into euill before we be ware. Is it not lawfull to be mery, lawfull to drink wine, lawfull to feast, lawfull to make good cheere, lawfull to weare good clothes ? yes verily ; but vnder these precepts, come in riot, luxury, intemperance, pride, and a floud of euils. A Christian hath neuer more need to feare himselfe,
then

then when hee is to haue to doe in
such things, which in themselues
may be vsed. Hee is neuer, in any
thing, so subiect to a fall, especially
in such meetings to solemne feasts,
lest the *Table* of plentie should be-
come a *snare* ^c vnto him. Iob was ^c Psal. 69. 22.
very iealous of his children, that
they *blasphemed God in their hearts* ^d ^d Job. 1. 5,
when they were at their feasts.
What great euils doe wee finde in
Scripture, to haue accompanied
some great feasting, where the fear
of God hath not beene. At Nabals,
drunkennes ^e; at Abthaloms, mur-
ther ^f; at Ahashueroth his, a woful
breach betwixt him and his wife ^g; ^e 1 Sam. 25. 36
at Belshazzars, terrible blasphemy ^f 2 Sam. 13. 29
against God ^h; ^g Ester. 1. 10
at Herods, killing ^h Dan. 5. 3. 4.
of Iohn Baptist ⁱ. What iudgemēt ⁱ Math. 16. 6.
read we, to haue ouertaken men in
their secure eatings: Elah, smotten
and killed while he was *drinking* ^k; ^k 1 King. 15. 9.
the Israelites, *whiles the flesh was yet*
betwixt their teeth, before it was chew-
ed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled

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Num. 11. 33.

Iob. 1. 19.

1 Cor. 10. 11

Rom. 13. 13

Luk. 21. 34.

II. 5. 11.

Matth 24 38

23. 29. 35.

Eccle 10. 17.

against them¹. Iobs children, the house fell upon them at their banquet^m, I say with the Apostle, These things came vnto them for examples & were written to admonish vs. To the end therefore our reioycings and feasting at this or the like occasions, may not bee vnlawfull, two things are chiefly to be cared for: First that there be a carefull watching to preuent excesse. *Gluttony and Drunkennesse are works of Darkenes*ⁿ, & Take heed lest at any time your hearts be oppressed with them, saith our Sauiour^p There is a woe to those that continue til they be inflamed^q. It was one of the sins of the ould world, *eating & drinking like beasts*^r, as long as the stomacke would craue: Amans eating should be for strength not for drunkennesse^s. The second thing to be cared for, is that God be not banished out of our thoghts but that stil his presence may be remēbred & his iudgements considered. The neglect heereof is called

The Bridegroom. 31

a Feeding without Feare^r. It is one
 a of the common miseries of *feasting* now a dayes ; Men (as they
 thinke) must lay aside all thoughts
 and speeches of God and Godlines,
 or else they suppose they cannot be
 so mery as they would. Truth is
 by such meane, they should be re-
 strained from that which is called
mad mirth ^a, otherwise heereby ^{• Eccl. 2. 2.}
 they should be much quickened to
 an holy reioycing. And thus farre
 of those two things out of this
 Text, which concerne the occasi-
 on ; Now it remaineth to speake of
 the things especially intended by
 our Sauour which may concerne
 vs all. *Can the children of the Mariage*
chamber &c? Heere I will teach two ^{The 5th Doct.}
 doctrines. The one is this : *That the*
true ground of the ioy and reioycing of
Gods people, is and ought, to bee the
presence of Christ Iesus. This is that
 which our sauour here maintaines
 that the children of God haue a
 kind of immunity from mouning

32 *The Bridegroom.*

and from these straiter exercises of humiliation, when the spouse of the Church the Lord Iesus is among the: To cleere this point, the maner of Christs presence must be enquired into. He is either present in body, as he was at the time of speaking these words, with his disciples or after a spirituall maner, concerning which is that promise, *Loe I am with you alway, untill the end of the world* ^a: He is spiritually present, either by outward meanes, or by inward feeling. The outward meanes by which he is present, are the publique miniltry and preaching of the word, and the free vse of the sacramentes. Hence is it, that Christ is sayd to bee in *the mids* of such assemblings ^y, Iohn beheld him in *the mids of the seauen golden candlesticks* ^z: The Ministers of the Gospell are sayd to bee in *his stead* ^a: in their teaching, the *Wisdome of God poureth out his minde* ^b, vnto the sons of men. As for inward

^a Math. 28. 20.

^y Math. 18. 23

^z Ecu. 1. 13.

^a 1. Cor 5. 20.

^b Prou. 1. 23.

ward feeling, whē the Lord vouch-
safeth it, he is sayd to be *neere*^c, ac- ^cPs. 145. 18.
cording as when hee withdraweth
it, he is sayd to *absent himselfe*^d. So ^dPsal. 77. 7. 8.
that now the meaning of the do-
ctrine is, that the maine matter of
all sound reioicing vnto Gods chil-
dren, is the liberty of the means of
grace, and the euidence which they
feel in their foules of Gods fauors?
Touching reioicing in the out-
ward means, we haue for example
the ioy of the men of Bethshemesh
at the restoring of the *Arke*^e, the ^e1 Sam. 6. 13.
joy which was in Hierusalem at the
reforming of religiō by Hezekia^f: ^f2 Chro. 30.
the shouting when the foundation ^g
of the Tēple was laid after the cap-
tiuity^g, the extraordinary gladnes, ^gEzra. 3. 11.
when the publique teaching of the
Law, which had a long time beene
discōtinued, was again establisht. ^hNehc. 8. 13.
In the new Testamēt Samaria had
great ioy, for Philips ministryⁱ: Paul ⁱAct. 8. 8.
while he lay by the heels yet trium-
phed because *Christ was preached*^k. ^kPhil. 1. 18.

34 The Bridgroom.

By these, we see how the *Children of the marriage chäber*, take a kind of holy contentment, when the *Bridgroom* is among them by the outward means. Now for reioicing in the inward euidences of his presence, to the soule & spirit, look we vpon Dauid boasting in *that ioy of heart*, which was giuenhim by the Lords *lifting vp of his countenance vpon him*: vpon the *Eunuch*, going on his way reioicing, because he felt how faith in Christ was wrought in his soule^m: This was Maries ioy, *reioicing in spirit*, that she knew God in Christ was *become her Saviour*ⁿ. This is that ioy which is called *Ioy in the holy Ghost*^o, *peace in beleeu ng* ^p. Peter termeth it *glorious & unspeakable*^q, and Christ saith it is such as *none can take away*^r. This serueth very effectually to shew, that they are none of the *Bridgroomes Friends*, which in these euidences of his presence finde so little sweetnes. Men reioyce in their wealth, in their gettings, in their health

^l Psal. 4. 7.

^m Aa. 3. 39.

ⁿ Luk. 1. 46.

^o Rom. 14. 17.

^p Rom. 15. 13.

^q 1. Pet. 1 8.

^r Ioh. 16. 32.

The 7^{se}.

health, in their beauty, in their honor, in their belly-cheare, in their gay apparrell, in the pleasures of sinne, in the satisfying of their wretched lusts, in the ouerthrow & fall of their enemies. Such things as these giue a kind of contentment vnto many : But how scarce are they, which vnfeinedly reioyce in the liberty of the Gospell, in the freedome of true religion, in the great mercy and goodnes of God, vouchsafing to reueale vnto vs the knowledge of himselfe in Christ Iesus. Whose spirits are enliued, whose heart leapeth, like the *Babe in the wombe of Elizabeth* ^c, for ioy of ^cLuk. 1. 44. this inestimable blessing ? Christ is a continuall suter to vs, by the Ministry of his word, he doth in it make loue to our soules, he wooeth vs, he beseecheth & entreateth vs to entertaine him, he offereth vnto vs many tokens of heauenly kindnesse, many rich graces to which all the Iewels in the earth are not worthy

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thy to bee compared. But (alas) how be these things regarded? who (generally) doth not take more pleasure in an idle tale or in a scurrilous iest, then in these particulars. Well, we see heere, Christ accounts his presence in his Church, whither in body or in spirit, whither visibly or by meanes, to be as the presence of a Bridegroom to his best beloved: If we feele our selues to finde no cōfort in those things which are reported to be so full of cōfort; it is a signe we are none of the *children of the Wedding*, but of those rather, which shalbe shut out & dismissed with that heavy voyce, when yet they shall beg & desire to come in,

Math. 25. 11. Depart from me I doe not know you.

The next Doctrine hence to bee obserued is, *That it is the wisdom and duty of gods children in the daies of their reioycing, and then when they haue most comfort by the Bridegroomes presence, yet to thinke upon and to make prouision for a change.* Our Sauour here

The Bridegroom. . 37

here faith, that albeit he now vseth
his disciples somewhat tenderly,
these being (as it were) the daies of
his first acquaintance, yet they
must not thinke to liue so alwaies,
but know rather, that there bee
times of more straightnes, and of
greater sadnes to be looked for. So
that it is plaine, that it is the wise-
dome of Gods children, in the
daies of their greatest ioy to be in
continuall expectation of a time of
morning : As the *Bridegroom* is
with them, so they must remember
that the *Bridegroom* may be taken
from them. For this cause Christ of-
ten told his disciples of *hauing affli-*
ction in the world ^a, of *weeping & la-*
menting, when the world was iocund ^x,
of *drinking in his cup* ^y, of being *hated*
of all men ^z. The poore Jewes were
in perplexity, while the *King and Ha-*
man sate drinking in the palace ^a. We
must resolute to passe through ma-
ny stormes, before we attaine to the
End of our Faith the saluation of our
soules

^a Ioh. 16. 33

^x Ioh. 16. 20.

^y Math. 23. 22.

^z Math. 24. 9.

^a Esth. 3. 15.

1. Pet. 1. 9.

soules ^b. It is worth the noting, how God in all ages, hath kept a kind of cōtinual entercourse in his church, betwixt peace and persecution, betwixt quietnes and trouble. It hath neither been alwaies vnder the crosse, nor alwaies flourishing in an outward settlednes. Sometimes in kingdōes & states, the gospel hath been freely preached, the sacramēts ordinarily administred, publique assemblies vsually frequēted, without danger: Sometimes againe it hath been intermitted, nay it hath been banished & persecuted, and it hath been as much as a mans life hath been worth, to be knowne to professe it. And as is the state of the church in general, so is it of Christians in particular. Sometimes they hear the *Bridegroomes* voice secretly & sweetly speaking peace to their soules by his spirit, and this causeth much comfort, sometimes they be much perplexed with doubtings & sad passions, and this occasioneth a
great

The Bridegroom. 39

great deale of sorrow: Sometimes they haue the *voice of ioy and deliuerance in their tabernacles* ^{Ps. 118. 15.}, & sometimes againe; *bitter grieve* in steed of *Felicity* ^{II. 38. 17.}. How then can it but bee wisdome to expect *affliction & tribulation*. The expectation of it cannot hasten it, nay, it may preuent it, at the lest it shall cause it to be the more easie when it commeth.

Here is a necessary aduertisement for vs. Wee now through Gods ^{The Ps.} goodnes, do enioy the *Bridegrooms* presence, his voyce soundeth amongst vs in the dayly ministry. Happy were wee if we reioyced in it, as we should. If we do, yet let vs not forgette that the *Bridegroom* may be taken from vs & that there may come daies of greater desolation. Who can tell, nay (considering our sinnes) who hath not reason to feare, that God will take away from vs the meanes of grace, and depriue vs of the comfortablenes of his blessed word in the commons

40 *The Bridegroom.*

mones thereof? when we shall see a dimming of such Lights, by whose bright shining many haue been comforted; when we shall behold Pulpits taken vp, with such *Prophets as looke out vaine & foolish things for the people, not labouring* (as they should) *to discouer their Iniquitie,* ^c, when we shall finde in the multitude such a grosnes of heart, as was sometimes in those of *Ierusalem*, when, they did not know the things which belonged to *their peace* ^f, then let vs feare the *Bridegrooms* going. The present condition of the times should worke somewhat wth vs: we see or may see, what working, and what plotting there is among Papists, by trecherie and bloudy deignes, to put out the Light of the gospell, & to cause the voice of the *Bridegr.* vtterly to cease. And yet alas we sit still as if there were no danger. It is now verified, which was said of old, *The Lord did call vnto weeping & mourning, but behold, ioy and gladnes,*
eating

^c Lam. 2. 14.

^f Luk. 19. 43.

eating Flesh and drinking wine^h. Thus we ^h *II. 22. 12.*
 go on in a kind of belotted course, till a ^{13.}
dart strike through our liuer as an ox that
goeth to the slaughter, or as a Foole to the
stockes for Correctionⁱ : Oh that there ⁱ *Pro. 7. 22.*
 might be a generall humbling of our ^{23.}
 selues before the Lord, *teares running*
downe as a riuer, and, our Hearts crying to
the Lord^k. That mischief may re- ^k *Lam. 2.*
 turne vpon the heads of the cōtriuers, ^{18.}
 & that for his names sake, for his truths
 sake, for his son Christs sake, the glori-
 ous gospell of his sonne, the gracious
 voice of the *Bridegroom* may be cōtin-
 ued with vs to the end of the world.
 We haue iust cause to feare the begin-
 nings of Gods iudgemēts, & yet with
 al to admire euē his lothnes to depart,
 like that of old, when *the glory of the*
Lord departed by degrees, first from the
Cherub, to the doore of the houseⁿ, then ⁿ *Ezek. 10.*
to the entry of the gate of the Lords house^o, ^{4.}
then from the midst of the city to the moun- ^o *Ver. 19.*
taine towards the east side of the city^p. The ^p *1. Ch. 11.*
 Lord would as it were haue vs to en- ^{23.}
 treat him, he looketh to bee importu-
 ned

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ned. Let vs therfore euen this day *vow*
unto the mighty God of Iacob^a, that we wil
preferre Ierusalem to our chiefe ioy^r, and
 that we will euē wraſtle with the *Bride-*
groom as Iacob did with the *Angel^c*. Oh
 if any thing may keep him yet with vs,
 ſure he ſhall not depart. It were better
 to faſt before to keep him with vs, thē
 to faſt whē he is gone, to reſtore him to
 vs: Better to weepe in Sion, to pre-
 uent Babell, then when we ſit *by the ri-*
uers of Babell, to weepe for Sion^e: This
 is the maine uſe. Albeit the aduertise-
 mēt may be further ſtretched, to eue-
 ry prinate Chriſtian. Doſt thou now
 feele in thy ſelfe, euidēces & pledges of
 the fauor of God in Chriſt Ieſus, it is
 good to reioice in them, it is good alſo
 to know that it is poſſible for them to
 be ouerclouded for a time, & that the
 Lord may call thee to ſome inward
 conflicts: Make ready therefore for
 the Combat: The *Bridegroom* goeth
 & cometh not only by giuing and re-
 moouing the outward meanes, but by
 giuing & remoouing inward feeling.

F I N I S.

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